

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 023599

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION TO SECSTATE INFO BRASILIA LA PAZ SANTIAGO
JAN 29, 1976 FROM LIMA

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 0896

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, BO,CH,BR,PE

SUBJ: GOP CONSIDERATION OF BOLIVIAN OUTLET TO THE SEA

1. PRELIMINARY TALK DURING LUNCH ON MARCONA TOUCHED BRIEFLY
ON PERUVIAN RESPONSE TO CHILE-BOLIVIA INITIATIVE ON OUTLET
TO SEA. FOREIGN MINISTRY SECRETARY GENERAL MARCHAND SAID
THAT GOP WAS APPROACHING THE ISSUE WITH EXTREME CARE,
THAT AN "INDEPENDENT" COMMISSION OF MAJOR NATIONAL FIGURES
AND SENIOR FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS WAS MEETING THREE
TIMES A WEEK TO ANALYZE ALL FACTORS IN THE SITUATION, AND
THAT HE COULD NOT PREDICT WHEN ITS FINDINGS WOULD BE COM-
PLETE. MARCHAND NOTED PARENTHETICALLY THAT GARCIA BEDOYA'S
DELAYED DEPARTURE FOR THE U.S. WAS DUE IN PART TO HIS
MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMISSION AND MARCHAND'S DESIRE TO
UTILIZE GARCIA BEDOYA'S EXPERTISE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE
DURING A PERIOD OF SUBSTANTIAL TURNOVER IN KEY MINISTRY
POSITIONS.

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2. MARCHAND'S COMMENTS CONFIRMED THAT PERU FACES MAJOR

OBSTACLES IN FORMULATING A POSITIVE RESPONSE. THE COMMISSION, HE SAID, IS URGENTLY EXAMINING PERU'S TREATY RIGHTS AND RELATED INTERESTS, INCLUDING COMMERCIAL ACCESS TO THE PORT OF ARICA, WHICH MIGHT BE JEOPARDIZED BY THE INTERPOSITION OF A BOLIVIAN CORRIDOR. THE CONVERSATION MADE CLEAR THAT THERE IS ALSO SOME PERUVIAN SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE LONG TERM ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO BOLIVIA OF THE CHILEAN INITIATIVE. MARCHAND COMMENTED THAT THE INITIATIVE "SOLVES BOLIVIA'S OBSESSION BUT NOT BOLIVIA'S PROBLEM." HE FELT THAT BOLIVIA WOULD BE GETTING AN UNECONOMIC STRIP NOT SUITED TO EFFICIENT PORT FACILITIES, WHILE CHILE WOULD RECEIVE IN RETURN TERRITORY THAT WAS RICH IN MINERALS AND WOULD IMPROVE CHILE'S STRATEGIC POSTURE TOWARD BOLIVIA.

3. AS THIS IMPLIES, THE PERUVIANS CLEARLY VIEW THE OUTLET TO THE SEA QUESTION IN A BROAD GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT. THEY ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF A SETTLEMENT FOR THE BALANCE OF POWER IN SOUTH AMERICA. MARCHAND EXPLICITLY MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY THAT BRAZIL MAY IN EFFECT BE USING BOLIVIA TO CONSUMMATE LONGSTANDING DESIRES FOR A BRAZILIAN OUTLET TO THE PACIFIC. IF SO, HE NOTED, PERUVIAN-BRAZILIAN RAPPROCHEMENT WOULD BE LOGICAL, AND MIGHT OFFSET ANY RISE IN TENSIONS THIS MIGHT INVOLVE.

4. COMMENT: THE CONVERSATION WAS BOTH GUARDED AND SPECULATIVE. PERUVIANS DO NOT SEEM TO HAVE REACHED ANY CONCLUSIONS. BUT WE WOULD DO WELL TO KEEP IN MIND THAT THE REPERCUSSIONS COULD INVOLVE MORE THAN THE THREE COUNTRIES DIRECTLY CONCERNED. DEAN UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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